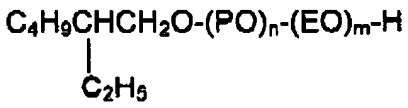
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims and reflects the amendment of claims 1, 5, 6 and 9.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An alkoxylate mixture which comprises at least one alkoxylate of the formula



where PO is a propyleneoxy unit, EO is an ethyleneoxy unit, n has an average value in the range ~~1.6–3.3~~ 1.6–2.4 per 2-ethylhexyl group and m has an average value in the range 3.0–5.5 per 2-ethylhexyl group, wherein the alkoxylate comprises less than 1.5% by weight of unreacted 2-ethylhexanol; said mixture being obtained by reacting 2-ethylhexanol in a first step with propylene oxide in order to obtain a propoxylated mixture, and in a second step ethoxylating the propoxylated mixture with ethylene oxide.

2. (Previously Presented) The alkoxylate mixture of claim 1, wherein the amount of 2-ethylhexyl propoxylate is between 2 and 20% by weight.

3. (Previously Presented) The alkoxylate mixture of claim 1 wherein n has an average value in the range 1.6–2.4 and m has an average value in the range 3.6–4.6.

4. (Previously Presented) The alkoxylate mixture of claim 1 wherein n has an average value in the range 1.8–2.3 and m has an average value in the range 3.6–4.6.

5. (Currently Amended) The alkoxylate mixture of claim 1 wherein the molar ratio between ethylene oxide and propylene oxide is in the range 1.6–2.6.

6. (Currently Amended) Method of producing an alkoxylate mixture which comprises reacting 2-ethylhexanol with ~~1.6–3.3~~ 1.6–2.4 moles of propylene oxide per mole 2-ethylhexanol in the presence of a propoxylation catalyst at a temperature from 110°C to 130°C in a first step in order to obtain a propoxylate mixture followed by ethoxylating the propoxylate mixture in a second step with 3.0–5.5 moles of ethylene oxide per mole 2-ethylhexanol propoxylate in the presence of an ethoxylation catalyst at a temperature from 60°C to 180°C.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6 wherein the propoxylation catalyst is an alkaline catalyst selected from the group NaOH, KOH, $NaOCH_3$ and $KOCH_3$.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6 wherein the ethoxylation catalyst is an alkaline catalyst selected from the group NaOH, KOH, $NaOCH_3$ and $KOCH_3$ or a narrow range catalyst selected from the group Brönstedt acids, Lewis acids and $Ca(OH)_2$, and mixtures thereof.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7 the propoxylation and ethoxylation catalyst is $KOCH_3$.

10. (Previously Presented) A method of cleaning a hard surface which comprises treating said surface with a cleaning effective amount of the alkoxylate mixture of claim 1.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6 wherein the total amount of propylene oxide utilized in said first step is allowed to react.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 6 wherein any unreacted 2-ethylhexanol is removed from the propoxylate mixture prior to ethoxylating said propoxylate mixture in said second step.